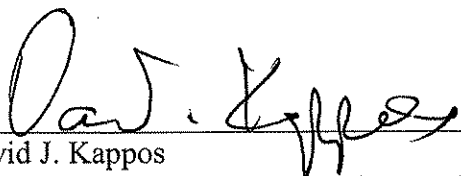


**Closing of the United States Patent and Trademark Office
on Monday, December 21, 2009**

In view of the official closing of the Federal Government offices in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area, including the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO), on Monday, December 21, 2009, the USPTO will consider Monday, December 21, 2009, to be a "Federal holiday within the District of Columbia" under 35 U.S.C. § 21(b) and 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.6, 1.7, 1.9, 2.2(d), 2.195 and 2.196. Any action or fee due on Monday, December 21, 2009 (or the preceding Saturday (December 19, 2009) or Sunday (December 20, 2009)) will be considered as timely for the purposes of, e.g., 15 U.S.C. §§ 1051(b), 1058, 1059, 1062(b), 1063, 1064, 1126(d), or 35 U.S.C. §§ 119, 120, 133 and 151, if the action is taken, or the fee paid, on the next succeeding business day on which the USPTO is open, that is, Tuesday, December 22, 2009. 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.7(a) and 2.196.

37 C.F.R. §§ 1.6(a)(2), 2.195(a)(4) and 2.198 provide that correspondence deposited in the Express Mail Service of the United States Postal Service (USPS) in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.10 or 2.198 will be considered filed on the date of deposit (as shown by the "date-in" on the Express Mail mailing label) with the USPS. Thus, any paper or fee properly deposited in the Express Mail Service of the USPS on Monday, December 21, 2009, in accordance with 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.10 or 2.198 will be considered filed on its respective date of deposit in the Express Mail Service of the USPS (as shown by a "date-in" of December 21, 2009, on the Express Mail mailing label).

37 C.F.R. § 1.6(a)(4) and 37 C.F.R. § 2.195(a)(2) provide that patent and trademark-related correspondence transmitted electronically to the USPTO will be considered filed in the USPTO on the date the USPTO received the electronic transmission. Thus, any patent and/or trademark-related correspondence transmitted electronically to the USPTO on Monday, December 21, 2009, will be considered filed in the USPTO on the date the USPTO received the complete electronic transmission. Correspondence successfully received by the USPTO through the patent Electronic Filing System (EFS-Web) will receive the date as indicated on the Acknowledgement Receipt.

Date: 12/22/09 
David J. Kappos
Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and
Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office